

## A new *Hydrocotyle* from Western New York

EDITH FETHERSTON

The word *Hydrocotyle* is from the Greek, meaning water and cup. Plants of this genus thrive in moist places and the roundish leaves have a cup-like depression in the middle: they are creeping perennials.

While exploring in July, 1926, I found an unusual *Hydrocotyle* along a small stream in a virgin forest, one mile north of Washington Hunt in Wyoming County, New York, and just a few miles east of Letchworth Park.

My *Hydrocotyle* was prostrate, rooting at the nodes. The peduncle was short, about 1 cm. long, the flowers minute. The petioles were slightly hairy and varied from 1 to 9 cm. in length. This was also the height of the plant above the ground. The leaves were peltate and there seemed to be some proliferation of the flowering stalk. The leaf was centrally attached and shining, about 2 cm. across, in appearance like a small umbrella, 7 to 9 lobes very slightly indented.

There were scale-like stipules at the base of the petioles: the flowers were very small, cream colored in umbel-like clusters opposite the leaves; sometimes one umbel appearing above another; calyx-teeth minute; petals entire, concave. The fruit was strongly compressed about 2.5 mm. high and 3 mm. wide, slightly notched or subcordate at both ends, intermediate ribs were quite evident and often slightly corky, the dorsal one was acute.

In the Summer of 1930 I gave a living plant of the *Hydrocotyle* to Mr. M. S. Baxter upon the advice of Professor Guy A. Bailey of the Geneseo Normal School, Geneseo, N. Y. Mr. Baxter was unable to identify my *Hydrocotyle*. At the same time I gave several living specimens to Mrs. W. Austin Wadsworth, Geneseo, Livingston County, N. Y. and in June 1931 in visiting the gardens of Mr. Baxter and Mrs. Wadsworth, I found my *Hydrocotyle* not only living but increasing in number, and, especially in Mrs. Wadsworth's garden, spreading in quite a remarkable way.

On September 15th, 1930, I brought all my remaining specimens to Pittsburgh and learned from Dr. O. E. Jennings, (Professor of Botany of the University of Pittsburgh and Editor-

in-Chief of the Bryologist), that my plant was not *Hydrocotyle americana*, although the flower resembles it and that it was not *H. interrupta* or *H. verticillata*. Comparisons were made also with specimens from various countries in the herbarium of the Carnegie Museum, and no corresponding type was discovered.

Upon the advice of Miss Hilda Loines in July, 1931, I sent a living flowering specimen of this *Hydrocotyle* to Mr. Montague Free, Horticulturist of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. Mr. Free and Dr. H. K. Svenson, Assistant Curator of Plants of the Brooklyn Garden, were unable to identify it.

On September 2, 1931, I gave a pressed *Hydrocotyle* in flower and a living one in fruit to Dr. O. E. Jennings for the Herbarium of the Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

From the original plant found in 1926, Mr. Baxter has several plants, Mrs. Wadsworth many, there is one plant in the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, and two pressed specimens in the Herbarium of Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh, one of these in flower, and one in fruit, and I still possess eight living plants in my garden in Pittsburgh.

The plant has been much admired and is greatly prized by those who have specimens. It is easy of culture if planted in a naturally wet situation or where the ground is kept constantly moist and the plant and ground around it left undisturbed. I use peat moss as an aid in keeping constant moisture, and always plant in the shade.

After having tried for five years to identify the plant and after having consulted books and authorities, I believed I had discovered a new species of *Hydrocotyle*. Dr. Jennings has confirmed my conclusion that the plant is a new species and has furnished the following technical description of the plant:

***Hydrocotyle Fetherstoniana* Jennings, sp. nov.**

Planta herbacea; petiolis sparse et minute hirsutis; fructu basi et apice plus minusve emarginato, costis intermediis saepe leviter suberosis.

Small perennial herb. Stem creeping, rooting at the nodes, sparsely branching. Petioles erect, slender, 1.5–9 cm. long, sparsely and minutely hirsute; leaf-blades peltate, suborbicular to oval, up to 2 cm. in diameter, shallowly and crenately about 8- to 10-lobed, glabrous. Peduncles about 1 cm. long, usually bearing an apical cluster of 2–4 flowers with often 1 or 2 others

at an imperfect whorl 1-2 mm. below the apex. Pedicels about 0.5 mm. long. Fruit 2.5 mm. high, 3 mm. wide, more or less distinctly emarginate or subcordate at both ends; intermediate ribs evident, often slightly corky, the dorsal rib acute.

Differs from the Coastal Plain species (*H. verticillata* Thunb.), to which it is most closely related, by having petioles minutely hirsute instead of glabrous, by fruit more or less emarginate at both ends, and by having the intermediate ribs often somewhat corky.

Named in commemoration of the garden of Mrs. John T. Fetherston, to which the plant has been transplanted.

Type: From plants growing in the Fetherston garden, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, September 2, 1931, originally collected in moist woods along a stream in virgin forest, one mile north of Washington Hunt, Wyoming Co., N. Y., and a few miles east of Letchworth Park, by Edith Fetherston, July, 1926.

The type specimen has been placed in the herbarium of the Carnegie Museum.

PITTSBURGH, PA.